

the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, especially with so many in the gallery today, I rise to defend JOHN KERRY from the onslaught on the floor today, a decorated veteran in Vietnam, a person who received three Purple Hearts and the Silver Star for serving with distinction. And now, because he is a candidate for President of the United States, he receives the unbridled attack from the opposition.

We ought to rise above this here on the floor of the House and across the Nation in this debate. What we need to do is focus on the issues that this country desperately needs to address, seniors that need prescription drugs, people that are out of work and unemployed.

What we need is leadership, the kind of leadership that JOHN KERRY provided in the fields of Vietnam, that he has provided with distinction in the United States Senate, and that he will provide as President of the United States.

THE BENEFITS OF MEDICARE'S NEW DRUG PROVISIONS

(Mr. BLUNT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, for too long seniors have been paying extraordinary high prescription drug costs with no relief measures in sight. But thanks to the recently signed Medicare and Prescription Drug Improvement and Modernization Act, Medicare will now provide drug cards to all seniors who need them at a cost ranging from a \$30 maximum each year to free.

These cards, even for those who would get them for free, are completely voluntary. They will be made available to seniors beginning June 1 of this year. Low-income seniors will have a \$600 annual credit on their card. Seniors can sign up for a Medicare-endorsed discount card as early as May 3.

Seniors are encouraged to find out what card is best for them by calling 1-800-MEDICARE and asking about drug savings. Seniors and their families can visit www.medicare.gov to find out more about which card is best for them where they live.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage all seniors and people who care about them to inquire about enrollment, to see if this is a better plan for them, and to begin immediately saving on their drug costs.

CREDENTIALS NEEDED FOR THOSE ATTACKING JOHN KERRY

(Mr. McDERMOTT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I came to the floor to talk about Earth Day, but listening to what is going on out here makes me think I will change my subject.

I spent 2 years, 1968 to 1970, as a psychiatrist in the United States Navy taking care of people who lived through what JOHN KERRY went to war about, and for anybody to come out here and attack his war record, you have to have pretty good credentials.

Now, if you served and showed up for drills at your local National Guard, I think those would be acceptable credentials. But if you were in the National Guard and you did not show up, you were AWOL for a whole year, you have got real nerve to start an attack on JOHN KERRY's character.

During that war many people on both sides of the issue, whether we should go to war or were against the war, acted bravely. But some people were simply not available. They never showed up for their flight physical. They were not there.

ATTACKS ON JOHN KERRY SHOULD NOT BE COUNTERNANCED

(Mr. INSLEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, one of the things America abhors is a sneak attack. President Roosevelt in this Chamber described December 7 as a day that would live in infamy.

What I saw a few minutes ago is a sneak attack on a Member of the U.S. Senate by a bunch of my colleagues who came down here and disparaged him, contrary to the rules of the House. The Speaker repeatedly admonished them for violating the best traditions of this House, and my colleagues continually came to the Chamber to continually violate those traditions of this House.

Mr. Speaker, I want to give notice that we have a long time in this election period coming up, and we have problems deciding what we are going to do about Iraq, and it is not going to help us if we turn this into a Chamber of personal assassination.

Let me just say, there is a lot of nerve in this Chamber attacking a guy who has a Bronze Star, a Silver Star and Purple Hearts in the tradition of his Nation, and it should not be counter-nanced by the Speaker ever under any circumstances, whether Democrats are in the Chamber to object or not.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). The gentleman will state it.

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I just want to raise a question. Is it proper, is it appropriate, is it a violation of House rules for Members of this body to attack Members of the other body by name?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. When a Member of the Senate is a presumptive nominee for President, it is proper and fair to speak about the Senator's

record, but not to make personal attacks.

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding this person is not even the nominee of his party yet.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has not purported to identify an actual nominee.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state it.

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, is it appropriate for the Speaker, who presides over this Chamber, when there is a clear and direct personal attack using personally disparaging comments about a Member of the United States Senate on a repeated basis, is it appropriate or allowable for the Speaker to interject and prohibit that activity, even without a Member of the Chamber expressing a concern?

In other words, does the Speaker have the ability to exercise preemptory power to enforce the rules of this House when there is a sneak attack disparaging the personal integrity of a U.S. Senator?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. That is the Speaker's role, and the Member should have seen the Chair admonish those not following the rules.

HONORING THE GARDEN GROVE ELKS CLUB

(Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Garden Grove Elks Lodge 1952 for their contributions to my community of Garden Grove, California.

The Garden Grove Elks Club is just one of thousands of Elks chapters across this Nation. They operate on the ideals of charity and patriotism, contributing to schools, police and fire departments, and also working with their youth in their community.

The Elks Club consists only of volunteers, those citizens who strive to make a difference based solely on the goodness of their heart.

I would also like to recognize Elks Lodge 1952's newly installed officers: Dave Offhaus, Dave Skelton, Gary Mueller, Randy Barrows, Lynn Johnson and Jim Faulkner. I wish these new officers much luck in the coming year, and I would also like to extend my appreciation for all that they do for our community.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will clarify what he had said to the gentleman from Washington.

In the event that a Member does need to be interrupted for improper references to presidential and nominated